

**March 13, 2018**  
**For Immediate Release**



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**SMART COLUMBUS SHARES VISION FOR  
SMART COLUMBUS EXPERIENCE CENTER**

*Opening in June 2018 on the Scioto Mile, the Smart Columbus Experience Center will educate on the future of mobility and engage residents in transforming transportation in our city*

**Columbus, OH**, March 13, 2018 – Smart Columbus today announced plans for the Smart Columbus Experience Center, a first-of-its-kind learning destination in the heart of downtown on the Scioto Mile riverfront. The Experience Center will be open to the public and serve as a destination for visitors around the world to envision what the future can look like, learn how Smart Columbus is leading the way, and explore how they may participate in the Smart Columbus movement to transport our city to the future.

“Our future is going to be big in ways that have yet to be imagined,” said Mayor Andrew J. Ginther. “Technology and innovation in transportation will grow our economy and put our people on ladders of opportunity toward a better life. Through the Smart Columbus Experience Center, we’ll show how new shared mobility options, as well as connected, autonomous, shared and electric vehicles, will make Columbus a more vibrant, more connected community. It will serve as a space where we can innovate and learn from each other and provide a platform for planning a future of shared mobility and prosperity.”

Since July 2017, nearly 1,500 residents and community leaders have participated in Smart Columbus Live, a two-hour educational session on smart mobility and the vision of Smart Columbus. The Smart Columbus Experience Center, located at 170 Civic Center Dr., is envisioned as a permanent extension of that experience, open to the public six days a week. The space will feature a 3,000 square foot showroom that will showcase cutting-edge transportation and sustainability technologies and interactive educational exhibits on the Smart Columbus project portfolio. The Experience Center will also showcase the latest electric vehicle models and enable residents to take a test drive in support of Smart Columbus’ electrification efforts.

“Columbus is attracting global attention as one of the world’s smartest cities, thanks to our win of the Smart City Challenge and the commitments and innovations of our local public and private sector,” said Alex Fischer, President and CEO of the Columbus Partnership. “By creating the world’s first smart city experience center, we’ll create a global stage to showcase our city’s mobility transformation. We’ll seek input from our residents and perspectives from industry thought leaders that will inform how we pursue growth and change. We’ll also share what we’ve learned with cities from around the world, enabling global advancements that will start right here in Columbus.”

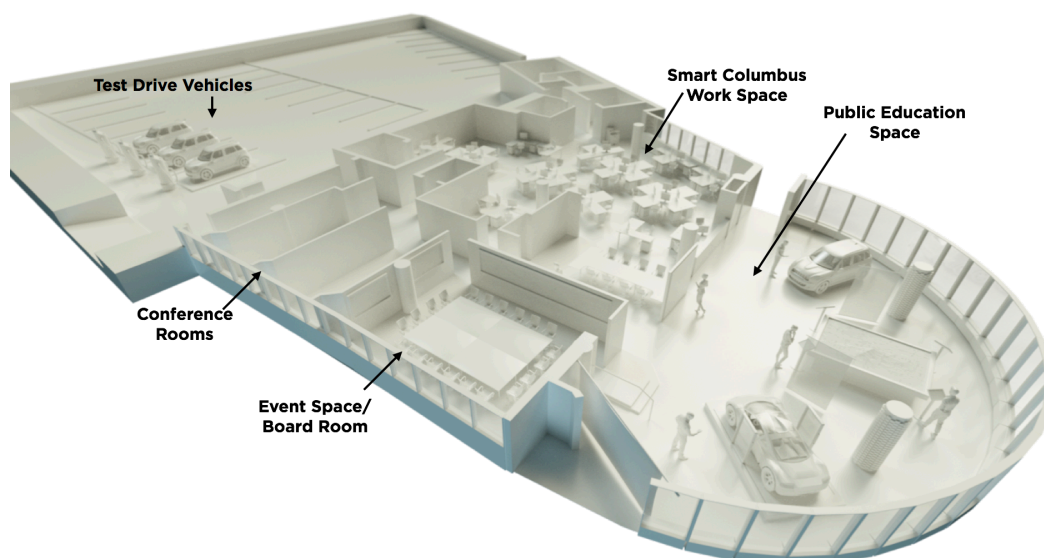
The Experience Center is modeled on world-class experiential environments that have been proven to engage residents and facilitate change. It is the first known facility in the world to provide a comprehensive view of smart mobility in the context of a smart city.

“Consumers want a place to test drive and learn without sales pressure. This new space will be a great way to engage the Columbus public about the benefits of electric vehicles,” said Zach Henkin, Deputy Director of Forth, which opened an electric vehicle education showroom in Portland in May 2017. “Feedback from consumers at for our showcase has been incredible and this has been a great way to impact car buying behavior.”

Construction and equipment is estimated at \$1 million. Funding will come from the \$10 million grant awarded to Columbus by the Paul G. Allen Philanthropies as the winner of the Smart City Challenge, as well as investments by corporate members of the Columbus Partnership. Funding has been requested from the State of Ohio Capital Bill. Smart Columbus has also issued a [Call for Partners](#), seeking donations of technology, vehicles and environmental design services to help appoint the space.

“Smart Columbus is about transforming our future through partnerships that make us greater than the sum of our parts,” said Fischer. “The Columbus Way is how we approach all big ideas and big challenges in Columbus, and this project will be no different – we need public and private partners to bring our vision for this community space to life. We’re fortunate for the support of the Paul G. Allen Philanthropies, and grateful to be considered for funding through the state capital bill. We are optimistic that local and national technology leaders will answer our call for support, so we can realize our vision for a hands-on, dynamic educational space.”

Editor’s Note: Renderings of the Smart Columbus Experience Center are available upon request.





### **About Smart Columbus**

The City of Columbus' Smart Columbus plan won the U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) \$40 million Smart City Challenge in June 2016 after competing against 77 cities nationwide to become the country's first city to fully integrate innovative technologies – self-driving cars, connected vehicles and smart sensors – into its transportation network. Columbus was also awarded an additional \$10 million grant from the Paul G. Allen Philanthropies to accelerate the transition to an electrified, low-emissions transportation system. Aligned investments totaling more than \$500 million have been made by the private, public and academic institutions in the region to support technology and infrastructure investments that upgrade Columbus' transportation network and help make Columbus the model connected city of the future. Smart Columbus is a regional smart city initiative co-led by the City of Columbus and Columbus Partnership that includes partnerships with The Ohio State University, Battelle, American Electric Power and many more.

For more information, visit the Smart Columbus website  
<https://www.columbus.gov/smartcolumbus/>.